

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph on page 6, lines 21-26, with the following amended paragraph:

Figs. 9-12 illustrate several views of a slider 200 according to certain embodiments of the present invention having a plurality of carbide structures such as pads 202 embedded in the silicon substrate 201.204. The pads 202 may in certain embodiments be formed from a process such as that described above in conjunction with Figs. 4-8 or may be formed by other processes such as, but not limited to a physical vapor deposition or chemical vapor deposition (CVD) method that does not require a melt step as described above.